



## **NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING ON PROPOSED WATER RATE INCREASE**

***February 08, 2012 7:00PM, Trinidad City Hall, 409 Trinity St., Trinidad***

Trinidad residents are encouraged to attend the public hearing for an opportunity to share their thoughts and comments with City officials regarding proposed water rate changes. Prior to recommending rate increases, City staff evaluates its service needs, mandated programs, and operations costs. This year the City is recommending rate increases to support the City's service obligations, appropriate staffing levels, capital reserves, and regulatory requirements.

### **You Can Be Heard**

Under Proposition 218, if you object to the proposed rates as described above, you may file a written protest with the City at, or before, the time set for the public hearing. A valid protest must contain a description of the property (such as the address or AP number) and the name, address, and phone number of the signer(s). Protests should be mailed to: P O Box 390, Trinidad, CA 95570 or delivered to: City of Trinidad, 409 Trinity Street, Trinidad, CA. One written protest will be counted for each parcel that is mandated to comply with the proposed rates. If there is a majority protest filed from affected properties, the proposed rate changes will not be imposed.

### **Water Rates**

The City of Trinidad needs to raise water rates. For the last several years the water fund has been operating under a deficit; to make up the difference the City has been dipping into financial reserves, which is not sustainable. The city is proposing to generate about \$50,000 per year through increased rates. This will provide funding for the following: (1) a staffing increase that went into effect in September, 2010 to assure compliance with new regulatory monitoring and treatment requirements and continue successful efforts to address water losses between the treatment plant and household meters; (2) offset the loss of interest earnings due to decline of interest rates; (3) provide for about \$15,000 annually toward capital expenditures such as water line repair/replacement, grant match, or increasing reserves for future projects.

As part of the water rate process, the City evaluated customer water use. In 2010, September was the highest water use month with a median household water use of 700 cubic feet per month. December was the lowest use month with a median household water use of 300 cubic feet per month. Customers can find out their water use from looking at their water bill, which presents the meter readings and total cubic feet used at the top left side of the water bill. The change in rates for customers using 300 cubic feet and 700 cubic feet are presented in the table below. Additional change in rates for a 5,000 and 10,000 cubic foot user is also presented as reference for commercial and other large users.

<b>CHANGE IN MONTHLY WATER RATES</b>						
	Inside City Customers <sup>1</sup>			Outside City Customers <sup>1</sup>		
Usage (Cubic Feet)	Existing	Proposed	Change	Existing	Proposed	Change
300	\$34.98	To		\$52.43	To	
700	\$45.02	Be		\$67.59	Be	
5000	\$152.95	Determined		\$230.56	Determined	
10000	\$278.45			\$420.06		

<sup>1</sup> Rate differential between inside and outside City customers was reduced from 50% to 25%, which resulted in a greater increase in rates for inside City customers.

## PROPOSED NEW WATER RATES

WATER SERVICE BASE RATE CHARGE	
Inside City Water Connections	\$40/ month
Outside City Water Connections	\$46/ month

WATER SERVICE CONSUMPTION CHARGE	
Inside City Water Connections	\$? cubic feet
Outside City Water Connections	\$? cubic feet

Rates will be increased annually by 2.5% to account for inflation. The rate adjustment will occur July 1 each year to match the City's fiscal year.

### Conserve Water And Save Money

- **Your dishwasher:** Run it only when it's full. You'll save 2 – 4.5 gallons per load.
- **Brushing you teeth:** Turn the water off. You'll smile big when you save 2 gallons per minute.
- **Showers:** By shortening them, you can save 2.5 gallons per minute.
- **Washing clothes:** Wash full loads only and save 15 – 20 gallons per load.
- **Native plants:** Replace a portion of your lawn with climate friendly plants which require less water. Visit the North Coast Native Plant Society's Webpage for more information at <http://northcoastcnps.org/>
- **Adjust your sprinklers:** To prevent wasting water and reduce runoff.
- **Reduce Evaporation:** Water plants and lawns only before 6:00 am and after 8:00 pm.
- **Replace Old Water Fixtures:** New plumbing codes were adopted in 1992 mandating more efficient water fixtures. Replacing an old toilet with a new 1.6 gallon per flush model can save 2 to 4 gallons per flush.
- **Improve Septic Tank Performance:** Water conservation in the home will help your septic system function properly by improving septic tank solids settling and reducing the solids in your drainfield.

1 cubic foot of water  
equals 7.48 gallons

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Trinidad CA 95570  
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Name  
Address  
City, State Zip